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1762













ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS

SIXTY-NINTH AND WOODLAND AVENUE

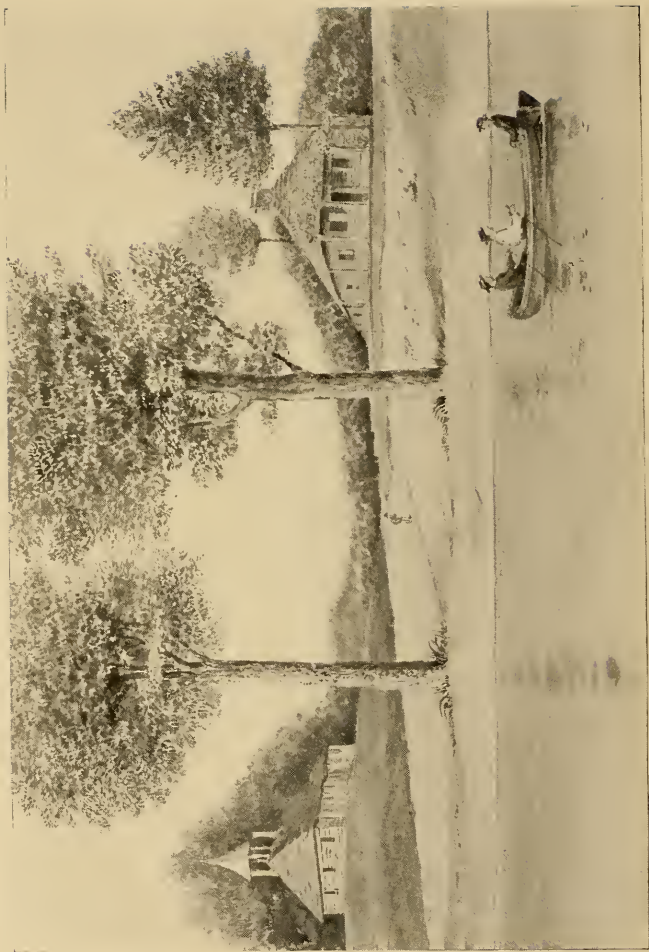
PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

1762









THE SWEDES CHURCH OF 1677 AT WICACO AND THE HOUSE OF SVEN SENER AD-  
JOINING AT WHAT IS NOW SWANSON AND CHRISTIAN STREETS, PHILADELPHIA,  
PENNSYLVANIA (9). THIS CHURCH OF 1677 FOLLOWED THE BLOCK HOUSE  
(WHICH HAD BEEN USED AS A CHURCH) OF 1665.

# THE OLD SWEDES' CHURCH

OF

## ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS

1762



FRONT VIEW FACING SIXTY-NINTH STREET

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Some of my people were of the Swedes —*Sisom*.

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J.C. Callahan

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ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS  
SIXTY-NINTH AND WOODLAND AVENUE  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNA.

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CORNER OR FOUNDATION STONE LAID ON THURSDAY,  
AUGUST 5TH, 1762.

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THE church of St. James of Kingsess, at what is now 69th and Woodland Avenue (1), Philadelphia, was the third (2) of the three old Swedish Lutheran Churches which formed what was known as the Wicaco Mission. This Mission, which was one of the branches of the Swedish Lutheran Church in America, known collectively as the Swedish Mission, (8) was composed of the three churches of *Gloria Dei* (Wicaco), (9) Christ Church, Upper Merion, and St. James of Kingsess. The church buildings now standing of these three churches were built as follows: *Gloria Dei*, in 1700; Christ Church, Upper Merion, in 1760; and St. James of Kingsess, in 1762. (2) But the present church at Upper Merion includes an addition of transepts, chancel and tower built in 1837 and the present church of St. James of Kingsess includes an addition built in 1855 at the rear of the original building. From their organization until the death of the Rev. Nicholas Collin, D. D., in 1831, the churches composing the Wicaco Mission were under Swedish Lutheran rectors, sent over by the King through the church in Sweden.(3)

These three churches were chartered by John Penn on September 25th, 1765, as one corporation, under the title of "*the Rector, Church Wardens, and Vestrymen of the United Swedish Lutheran Churches of Wicaco, Kingessing, and Upper Merion, in the county of Philadelphia, in the province of Pennsylvania*" (3); and that charter was subsequently confirmed by Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, passed October 30th, 1787. The charter and Act confirming it are set out in full in the Appendix to Dr. Clay's Annals, 1st Edition (3).



The Swedish Mission came to an end in 1841; and that year, therefore, marked the severance of the Wicaco Mission from the parent Swedish Church; but the three congregations composing the Wicaco Mission had a rector in common until 1843, in which year they dissolved their connection, and so the Wicaco Mission came to an end. Two years later St. James and *Gloria Dei* connected themselves with the Protestant Episcopal Church as separate parishes, and Christ Church also became an independent parish (3).

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THE Corner or "*Foundation*" Stone of St. James of Kingseß was laid August 5, 1762. In reference to which Rev. Dr. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (5) sometimes called the "*Patriarch of American Lutheranism*" in his diary (in German) states:

"Sunday, August 1, 1762. In the evening also had a visit from Mr. Wrangel, I also had to make a visit. At forenoon to-day the public was invited for next Thursday to Kingseß over the Schuylkill to attend the laying of the foundation stone of a Swedish Lutheran Church.

"Thursday, August 5, 1762. In the morning at 8 o'clock I journeyed over the Schuylkill to Kingseß—Rev. Mr. Borrell commenced by offering the regular prayer and then read the 136th Psalm. Afterward the Mr. Provost preached a sermon. Then the Trustees, the Provost, and remaining preachers formed a procession. The Mr. Provost made a short address, Esquire Coultas read the written matter, and laid same in the stone, and the Mr. Provost laid the stone explaining under which religion doctrine and form of government this church had been built, and gave it the name of St. James Church. Thereupon the rest of the clergymen, the Trustees, and I briefly bid them farewell. For the close we sang 'The Lord is never far away throughout all grief distressing' etc. (6) I arrived home about 5 o'clock."

The original manuscript diary (written in German) from which the above is quoted has never been translated in full or published, and is now in the possession of the Krauth Memorial Library of Lutheran Theological Seminary at Mount Airy, Philadelphia, Pa. (7). (See note 11.)



WICACO (GLORIA DEI-OLD SWEDES) CHURCH AT SWANSON AND CHRISTIAN  
STREETS, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA. DEDICATED JULY 2D, 1700. .

ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS



REV. C. M. WRANGEL, 1727-1786  
(COPYRIGHTED BY AMANDUS JOHNSON)

REV. CHARLES MAGNUS WRANGEL, D. D., WHO BUILT CHRIST  
CHURCH, UPPER MERION, IN 1760, AND ST. JAMES,  
OF KINGSESSING, IN 1762.

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As we have not been able to obtain an accurate cut, print or "picture" of the church as originally constructed in 1762, we refer our readers to what we understand to be a complete, accurate and somewhat "unique" description of it given by Prof. Amandus Johnson in his history of the Swedish Settlements, etc. Vol. 3 (in preparation), quoting from Dr. Wrangel's report to the Archbishop of Upsal, Sweden, at the time the church was built. It is not at present accessible to us (4).

*ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS*



CHRIST CHURCH, UPPER MERION (OLD SWEDES) BRIDGEPORT, PENNSYLVANIA. BUILT BY DR. WRANGEL AND DEDICATED JUNE 25TH, 1760.



ST. JAMES OF KINGSESSING (OLD SWEDES), 69TH AND WOODLAND AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA. BUILT BY DR. WRANGEL. CORNER STONE LAID THURSDAY, AUGUST 5TH, 1762.

SIDE VIEW FACING WOODLAND AVENUE



THERE is a memorandum in the minute book of the Church dated 1776 (14 years after the laying of the corner stone) which reads:

"St. James Church was erected in the year of our Lord and Sayiour Jesus Christ 1760 and the corner stone was laid by the Reverend Charles Magnus Wrangle, D.D., assisted by his Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, the Trustees and Congregation of the said Church.

"Ministers of the German Lutheran Church in Philadelphia:—

"Reverend Henry Muhlenberg and Reverend Jno. Fred. Handstuk.

"Trustees and Superintendents:—

"Mr. James Coultas, Mr. William Boon, Mr. Sacharias Cox, Mr. Seth Thomas, Mr. Ephard Ellis, Mr. Mathias Nitillis, Mr. George Norton, Mr. Andrew Urian, Mr. Swan Culin, Mr. John Taylor, Mr. George Grantham."

The date 1760, is an error, unless it refers to the erection of the church organization and not the erection of the church building, the corner or foundation stone of which was not laid until Thursday, August 5, 1762. (See note 11.)

Dr. Muhlenberg was one of the grantees named in the deed of 1762 from Justis *et al* conveying the church lot. This deed refers to the lot as the "*lot upon which a church building is to be hereafter erected*," which shows on its face that the reference in the minutes of 1776 to the erection of the church in 1760 was either an error or that it meant that the church organization was erected in 1760 and not the church building.

The framed map recently placed in the vestibule of the church shows the location of the lot as conveyed by the Justis Deed of 1762 and also the larger tract of which it was a part and also the adjoining tracts. It is otherwise interesting.

Before the present church building was erected the Swedes conducted services (in their native language) in "the School House." What particular school house we do not know. It was perhaps in the predecessor of the old (still standing) Bannaker School House which was erected in 1789.



ST. JAMES OF KINGSESS



OLD KINGSESSING (PASCHALVILLE OR BANNAKER)  
SCHOOL HOUSE, 1789

Situate in rear of the Paschalville School on Woodland Avenue  
between Seventieth and Seventy-first Streets.

This old Stone School House in the rear of the brick school house on Woodland Avenue (formerly Darby Road, State Road, King's Highway, &c.), between 70th and 71st Streets, was erected in 1789. It is understood to be the oldest school building in Philadelphia and its predecessor was no doubt the School House in which the Swedes held their service prior to the completion of their church at Kingess. (10)

The lot upon which it stands was conveyed by Philip Price to George Gray, Jr., Matthew Huston, Justice Cox and Hugh Lloyd and the survivors or survivor of them "*in trust for the uses of a school in Kingessing aforesaid, for the benefit of the vicinity and particularly for the use of those who are contributors to the building of a School House on said Lot.*"

It was held by successive Trustees, "*in trust*" (as above stated), until as late as 1875, when by deed dated May 22, 1875, from Robert S. Paschall, the successor trustee, became vested in the City of Philadelphia, "*to hold the same in trust for the same uses, intents and purposes set forth and declared in and by a certain indenture, &c.,*" (the purposes set out in the deed of 1789). At that time the City of Philadelphia acquired certain adjoining tracts and began the building of the present school building, which has since been renovated and enlarged.

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Dr. Muhlenberg in his diary as late as March 6, 1763, states that he "preached at Kingess in the School House:"

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"Some of my people were of the Swedes"—*Sisom.*

NOTES.

1. Formerly Darby Road, State Road, King's Highway, etc.

2. Christ Church, Upper Merion,—dedicated Sunday, June 25, 1760. (See church records.) St. James of Kingseess—corner stone laid Thursday, August 5, 1762 (see Dr. Muhlenberg's diary &c.) While these churches were built in the years above stated the Swedes held services in the vicinity for many years prior thereto, either in frame churches, block houses, school houses, or settlers' residences under the direction of Swedish Lutheran Rectors sent over here by the King of Sweden. Rev. Reorus Torkillus was here as early as 1636. See Dr. Clay's Annals First Edition, page 149, etc.

3. See Dr. Jehu Curtis Clay's Annals of the Swedes on the Delaware, Second Edition, pages 137, 140, 157, 173, etc.

4. See "The Early Swedish Settlements on the Delaware etc. by Prof. Amandus Johnson, Ph. D., in "Old Penn" May 20th, 1911, and also Dr. Johnson's Early Swedish Settlements etc. in three volumes two of which have (May, 1911) been published, the other being in preparation. This work is commended to all interested in the history of the early settlements along the Delaware.

5. See "Hallische Nachrichten" (German Edition), Page 925, etc.

6. "Der Herr ist noch und nimmer nicht von seinem Volksgeschieden" etc. See Hymn No. 738, beginning with the fifth verse on page 248, in the (German) Song or Hymn Book of the Evangelical Brotherhood in North America—Moravian Publication Office, Bethlehem, Pa., 1904. This Hymn was composed in 1609. It also appears in other German Hymn Books.

7. See also Acrelius History of New Sweden which was translated from the Swedish by Rev. William M. Reynolds, D.D., and in particular see the Appendix thereto at pages 345, etc.

8. The Swedish Mission was composed of three distinct Rectorships, viz.:—(1) Wicaco, with Upper Merion and Kingsessing; (2) Christiana, in Delaware; and (3) Raccoon, with Penns Neck, in West Jersey. See Clay's Annals, Second Edition, page 119.

9. It was "Wicaco Church," not "Gloria Dei," by which this church was for a long time generally known. See Clay's Annals, Second Edition, page 56.

See pamphlet "The Swedes Church and House of Sven Sener, 1677," reprinted from Watson's Annals, First Edition, 1830, page 133, etc., by Griffin Ellwood Callahan and Doran Sisom Callahan, June, 1907.

10. Kingsess (Kingsessing) from the Indian "Chin-sessing." See Acrelius History, page 46.

11. It was not until August 3, 1761, that the Vestry of Wicaco concluded to erect a "church and a school house near by" at Kingsessing. See records of Upsala Cathedral, Sweden, quoting from reports from Wicaco Church. (Where was that Swedes School House located if it was, as contemplated, built.—*Sisom*.)







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